Introduced by Senator Correa

December 6, 2010

An act to add Chapter 5.2 (commencing with Section 19990) to Division 8 of the Business and Professions Code, and to amend Section 330b of the Penal Code, relating to Internet gambling.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 40, as introduced, Correa. Internet poker.

The Gambling Control Act provides for the licensure of certain individuals and establishments that conduct controlled games, as defined, and for the regulation of these gambling activities by the California Gambling Control Commission. Existing law provides for the enforcement of those regulations by the Department of Justice. Any violation of these provisions is punishable as a misdemeanor, as specified.

This bill would establish a framework to authorize intrastate Internet poker, as specified. The bill would require the department to adopt regulations, in consultation with the California Gambling Control Commission, governing the intrastate play of poker games on the Internet, and would provide for a licensed entity to operate an intrastate Internet poker Web site. The bill would make it a misdemeanor for any person or entity to offer or participate in any form of illegal Internet gambling, as defined, or to process any financial transaction arising out of participation in illegal Internet gambling. The bill would authorize the seizure of any money or property used in or derived from illegal Internet gambling, as specified, and would provide for any money or property that has been seized to be forfeited to the Internet Gambling Fund, as established by this bill. By creating new crimes, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

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The bill would authorize the department to assess fees on the licensed entity in an amount reasonably necessary to reimburse the department for its costs in implementing and administering these provisions, including a registration fee. The bill also would require the licensed entity to pay a license fee equal to an unspecified percentage of the fees collected by the licensed entity from players participating in poker games conducted on its Internet Web site. By imposing this fee, the bill would constitute a change in state statute that would result in a taxpayer paying a higher tax within the meaning of Section 3 of Article XIII A of the California Constitution, and thus would require for passage the approval of $\frac{1}{2}$ 3 of the membership of each house of the Legislature. The bill would provide for all fees to be remitted to the Internet Gambling Fund, which would be administered by the Controller subject to annual appropriation by the Legislature.

Existing law, subject to exceptions, generally prohibits the possession and use of a slot machine or device, as defined, and prohibits certain other acts and transactions pertaining to slot machines or devices. Existing law provides varying definitions of slot machine or device for these purposes. Violations of these provisions are punishable by varying misdemeanor penalties.

This bill would provide that personal, networked, or server computers are not included within the term slot machine or device, for purposes of these provisions, if operated pursuant to a valid license or permit to operate an intrastate Internet poker Web site, as defined.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

Vote: ²/₃. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: yes.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the 2 following:
- 3 (a) Leading gaming consultants estimate that in 2005, United
- 4 States citizens illegally wagered four billion dollars
- 5 (\$4,000,000,000) online at off-shore, non-United States Internet

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gambling Web sites, and that every week more than 1,000,000 California citizens play poker on the Internet.

- (b) Currently, 2,300 Internet gambling Web sites operate outside the United States, unregulated by any United States governmental entity and in violation of United States laws. Questions often arise about the honesty and the fairness of the games played on these Internet Web sites, and about the true purpose for, and use of, proceeds generated by these unregulated Internet Web sites.
- (c) In 2006, Congress passed, and the President signed, the Unlawful Internet Gambling Enforcement Act of 2006 (UIGEA). While UIGEA prohibits the use of banking instruments such as credit cards, checks, or fund transfers for interstate Internet gambling, the statute has not eliminated illegal, unregulated Internet gambling, nor has it provided any increased protection for participants from game operators and others who would impair the integrity of online gambling activity.
- (d) Congress included specific provisions in the UIGEA for individual states to permit intrastate Internet gambling, provided that state laws permitting and regulating that activity could impose reasonable protections against participation by underage persons or by persons located outside the boundaries of the states authorizing that activity.
- (e) It is in the best interest of the state and its citizens to permit operation of a government-regulated intrastate Internet poker wagering Web site because only through that authorization and regulation can Californians be ensured that the games they are playing are honest, that winners are paid when and in amounts due, and that the state and its citizens, rather than illegal off-shore companies, will benefit from economic activity in the state. Further, it is in the interest of the state to adopt a statutory basis for the regulation of intrastate Internet poker adequate to shield the state and players from organized crime and other corrupting influences, ensure that intrastate Internet poker is conducted fairly and honestly by both a licensed entity and the players, confirm the integrity of all activities conducted pursuant to this act, and protect the public health, welfare, and safety of all Californians.
- (f) The California Constitution provides that "slot machines" can only be played if located on Indian lands and offered by an Indian tribe pursuant to a tribal-state gaming compact, and thus, the use of the devices connected to the Internet for gambling would

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violate the California Constitution unless those devices are solely used for the conveyance of information related to the play of nonbanked, nonpercentage poker games.

- (g) The only practical and economically feasible way to ensure that Internet poker conducted entirely within California's borders receives governmental oversight adequate to ensure that the Internet Web site offering the gaming remains honest, safe, and in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws, and that the State of California receives the economic benefits from that activity to which the state is entitled, would be to limit that activity to the Internet Web site owned and operated by a licensed entity formed under the laws of this state and owned and operated by business entities licensed under the Gambling Control Act to own and operate gambling establishments licensed to operate in this state as of January 1, 2011, and the governments or wholly owned subentities of federally recognized California tribal governments. Because California law permits the operation of poker and other nonbanking, nonpercentage card games, those tribal governments are entitled under the federal Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA), to operate poker and other nonbanking and nonpercentage card games on their Indian lands without having to enter into class III gaming compacts with the State of California.
- (h) The purpose of this act is to provide persons over 21 years of age who are physically present within the State of California and desire to use the Internet to play poker games that are not prohibited by California law, and in a manner consistent with existing law, with a lawful, highly regulated means of doing so in conformity with all applicable laws and regulations. Therefore, nothing in this act, which authorizes the intrastate use of the Internet to conduct poker games, shall be construed to expand "gambling," as used in Article 13 (commencing with Section 19960) of Chapter 5 of Division 8 of the Business and Professions Code.
- (i) It is in the interest of the state and its citizens to increase sources of nontax, nonstate revenue for tribal governments to enhance their ability to provide services to their communities.
- (j) By enacting this act, the Legislature is expressly authorizing intrastate Internet poker within the State of California only in the limited and regulated form provided herein. This express

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authorization does not authorize any other form or type of gambling over the Internet.

SEC. 2. Chapter 5.2 (commencing with Section 19990) is added to Division 8 of the Business and Professions Code, to read:

Chapter 5.2. Intrastate Internet Poker

- 19990. The following terms shall have the following meanings:
- (a) "Department" means the Department of Justice and the entity within the department that is responsible for fulfilling the obligations imposed upon the department by this chapter.
- (b) "Gambling" has the same meaning as set forth in subdivision (*l*) of Section 19805.
- (c) "Gambling establishment" has the same meaning as set forth in subdivision (o) of Section 19805.
- (d) "Illegal gambling" means participating in, or engaging in conduct that materially aids, any form of gambling that is not conducted pursuant to a tribal-state gaming compact or not otherwise authorized by the laws of this state or the laws of the United States.
- (e) "Illegal Internet gambling" means illegal gambling conducted over the Internet.
- (f) "Internet" means the international computer network of interoperable packet switched data networks.
- (g) "Intrastate" means within the geographical borders of California.
- (h) "Intrastate Internet poker" means any nonbanked, nonpercentage poker game approved for play through use of the Internet within the state by the department, and that is conducted in accordance with this chapter.
- (i) "Licensed entity" means a legal entity formed under the laws of the State of California by gambling establishments licensed to operate in this state as of January 1, 2011, and the governments of federally recognized California Indian tribes eligible to operate poker games on their Indian lands, or wholly owned subentities of those tribes, for the purpose of operating an Internet Web site offering persons over 21 years of age who are physically present within the State of California the opportunity to play approved poker games on the Internet within the geographical boundaries of the State of California.

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(j) "Person" means an individual, partnership, corporation, limited liability company, or other business entity, including a federally recognized California Indian tribe or a subentity of such a tribe that is wholly owned by the tribe.

- (k) "Web site" means the unique Uniform Resource Locator of the licensed entity through which the licensed entity is authorized to operate intrastate Internet poker games.
- 19991. (a) No person or other entity may operate, for consideration, poker or other card games over the Internet in California unless licensed to provide those games by the department pursuant to this chapter and any regulations adopted thereunder. Intrastate Internet poker is hereby authorized, but only to the extent, and in the manner, prescribed in this chapter.
- (b) Any person or entity that offers or participates in illegal Internet gambling, or processes any financial transactions arising out of, or in connection with, participation in illegal Internet gambling, is guilty of a misdemeanor, and shall be punished by a fine of up to ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) and imprisonment in a county jail for up to one year.
- (c) Any money, other representative of value, or real or personal property used in, or derived from, illegal Internet gambling shall be subject to seizure by the department or any peace officer. Upon a finding by the Superior Court that the money, other representative of value, or real or personal property was used in, or derived from, illegal Internet gambling, that money or property shall be forfeited to the Internet Gambling Fund established in Section 19998.
- 19992. (a) Within 90 days of the effective date of the act adding this chapter, the department shall adopt regulations, in consultation with the California Gambling Control Commission, governing the intrastate play of poker games on the Internet to provide persons over 21 years of age who are physically present in California with the same protections enjoyed by persons playing in gambling establishments or in tribally owned gaming facilities. The department may issue licenses and promulgate regulations as it determines may be necessary to implement the provisions of this chapter, protect that gaming from criminal influences, and protect the public health, welfare, and safety of the people of California. However, persons licensed by the California Gambling Control Commission to own or operate a gambling establishment, the governments of California Indian tribes recognized by the United

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States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, or the wholly owned subentities of those tribal governments shall not be required to apply for or obtain licenses to own interests in a licensed entity.

- (b) The regulations adopted pursuant to subdivision (a) shall provide both of the following:
- (1) Procedures by which a licensed entity may apply for a license to operate an Internet Web site through which persons over 21 years of age and physically present within the state may play intrastate Internet poker, with the objective of facilitating the commencement of operation of the licensed entity's authorized Internet Web site as quickly as possible, thereby accelerating the receipt of revenues by the state.
- (2) Procedures by which persons over 21 years of age who are physically present in the state may register to lawfully engage in intrastate Internet poker games through an Internet Web site owned and operated by the licensed entity.
- (c) The intrastate Internet poker games shall be honestly and fairly run.
- (d) The licensed entity may offer intrastate Internet poker games pursuant to this chapter only on a network approved by the department containing an Internet Web site that is registered with the department to offer that service. The licensed entity shall not offer, for consideration, any form of Internet poker game independent of that network.
- (e) A person desiring to play intrastate Internet poker shall register with the licensed entity by presenting documentation, upon logging on to the licensed entity's intrastate Internet poker Web site, that the person is at least 21 years of age and is physically present within the state. After verifying the validity of the proffered documentation and confirming the person's physical presence within this state, the person may be permitted to play any intrastate Internet poker game provided by the licensed entity, subject to the licensed entity's right to exclude from participation in intrastate Internet poker games any person reasonably determined to be unsuitable to participate in those games, or whose participation would be contrary to requests concerning self-exclusion or limits on losses, amounts wagered, or playing time.
- (f) The licensed entity's intrastate Internet poker Web site shall use the services of an independent third party licensed by the

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department to perform identification, physical presence in the state, and age verification services for persons registering to play intrastate Internet poker games.

- (g) The licensed entity's intrastate Internet poker Web site shall use personal identification numbers and other technology so that only the registered person has access to his or her wagering account, and that games can be played only from within the geographical borders of the state.
- (h) The licensed entity shall provide for withdrawals from the wagering account only by check, made payable to the account holder and sent to the address of the account holder in the state, or by an electronic transfer to an account held by the verified account holder at a financial institution located within the state. The account holder also may withdraw funds from the wagering account at a licensed gambling establishment or tribal gaming facility participating in the licensed entity by presenting valid identification and verifiable personal and account information.
- (i) The licensed entity's intrastate Internet poker Web site shall provide information on problem gambling, including a problem gambling hotline telephone number that a person may call to seek information and assistance for a potential gambling addiction, and shall offer responsible gambling services, such as self-exclusion, limits on losses, amounts wagered, and playing time, and other services as the department reasonably may determine are appropriate.
- (j) The licensed entity shall allow the department access to its operating premises at any time and without notice to visit, investigate, and place expert accountants and other persons it deems necessary to ensure strict compliance with its regulations concerning game integrity, credit authorization, account access, and other security provisions, if those activities do not interfere with the normal lawful functioning of the licensed entity's operations.
- (k) The licensed entity shall offer, at the time of registration, the option to place a limitation on the amount of funds that may be transferred into a wagering account within any 24-hour period. The licensed entity shall adopt procedures to ensure that the player may not deposit more funds into the account than the amount specified. If, after the wagering account is opened, a person wishes to increase the amount of funds that may be transferred, the

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licensed entity may increase the amount after obtaining and verifying the validity of identification and personal information. However, that increase shall not be effective until at least 48 hours after the change is requested.

- (1) The licensed entity shall conduct intrastate Internet poker games in the same manner as those games are conducted in licensed gambling establishments or tribally owned gaming facilities in the state, except that the games shall be played with computers, rather than with tangible cards and chips, and the virtual cards shall be shuffled and dealt by the licensed entity's computer system, rather than by a natural person. Only nonbanked, nonpercentage poker games approved for play within the state by the department may be offered for play on the licensed entity's intrastate Internet Web site. The licensed entity's intrastate Internet Web site may collect fees from players in authorized poker games pursuant to the same player fee collection methods approved by the department under state law for use within nontribal licensed gambling establishments in California.
- (m) The department shall assess fees on the licensed entity in the amount reasonably necessary to reimburse the department for its costs in implementing and administering this chapter, protecting that gaming from criminal influences, and protecting the public health, welfare, and safety of the people of California.

1993. After the regulations required by subdivision (a) of Section 19992 are adopted pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act (Chapter 3.5 (commencing with Section 11340) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code), an entity seeking to be licensed to offer intrastate Internet poker games shall apply to the department for licensure to engage in that activity. The department shall charge the entity a registration fee sufficient to cover all costs associated with the issuance of the license, including any necessary background investigation.

19994. In addition to any licensing or other administrative fees that the department may assess as reimbursement for the costs of implementing this chapter, the licensed entity shall pay to the state a license fee equal to _____ percent of the fees collected by the licensed entity from players participating in poker games conducted on its Internet Web site.

19995. In the event that any federal statute now in effect or hereafter enacted either affirmatively authorizes, or repeals existing SB 40 — 10 —

prohibitions against, the interstate or international play on the Internet of house-banked or percentage games of chance, or games such as poker in which there is an element of chance but a player's skill predominates over the element of chance in determining the outcome of the game, and the federal statute allows a state to be excluded from application of that statute, the Governor and the Legislature shall take any action necessary to opt out of the application of that statute to persons physically present within the geographical borders of the state.

19996. Nothing in this chapter shall be interpreted to authorize the play of intrastate Internet poker in a manner that circumvents the limitation on gambling establishments, or the limitation on gambling tables, pursuant to Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 19800), and related state and local laws.

1997. If a court of competent jurisdiction determines that the enactment or implementation of this chapter entitles any California Indian tribe that is a party to a class III tribal-state gaming compact with the state to terminate or reduce payments to the Indian Gaming Revenue Sharing Trust Fund required by the compact on the ground that the state has breached the compact by enacting or implementing this chapter, all funds then on deposit in the Indian Gaming Revenue Trust Fund shall continue to be distributed quarterly in equal shares to all federally recognized California Indian tribes entitled to receive disbursements from the fund until all funds on deposit in the fund have been disbursed.

- 19998. (a) The state's percentage of player fees collected by the licensed entity, and any other fees paid by the licensed entity, shall be remitted to the Controller for deposit in the Internet Gambling Fund, which is hereby created in the State Treasury. The fund shall be administered by the Controller for the purposes of this chapter, subject to annual appropriation by the Legislature.
- (b) On or before March 31 of each year, each state agency with responsibilities imposed under this chapter shall submit a revenue needs request to fulfill those duties for the next fiscal year to the Senate Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review, the Assembly Committee on Budget, the Senate and Assembly Committees on Governmental Organization, and the Department of Finance. Each submission of revenue needs shall specify the justification for those costs.

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(c) On or before March 31 of each year, the State Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs, Office of Problem Gambling shall submit a revenue needs request for programs to address problem gambling that results from the offering of authorized games for the next fiscal year to the Senate Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review, the Assembly Committee on Budget, the Senate and Assembly Committees on Governmental Organization, the Senate and Assembly Committees on Human Services, and the Department of Finance. Each submission of revenue needs shall specify the justification for those costs.

(d) All remaining proceeds not allocated pursuant to subdivisions (b) and (c) shall remain in the Internet Gambling Fund, subject to appropriation by the Legislature for purposes related to this chapter.

19999. A city, county, or city and county shall not regulate, tax, or enter into a contract with respect to any matter related to this chapter.

SEC. 3. Section 330b of the Penal Code is amended to read:

330b. (a) It is unlawful for any person to manufacture, repair, own, store, possess, sell, rent, lease, let on shares, lend or give away, transport, or expose for sale or lease, or to offer to repair, sell, rent, lease, let on shares, lend or give away, or permit the operation, placement, maintenance, or keeping of, in any place, room, space, or building owned, leased, or occupied, managed, or controlled by that person, any slot machine or device, as defined in this section.

It is unlawful for any person to make or to permit the making of an agreement with another person regarding any slot machine or device, by which the user of the slot machine or device, as a result of the element of hazard or chance or other unpredictable outcome, may become entitled to receive money, credit, allowance, or other thing of value or additional chance or right to use the slot machine or device, or to receive any check, slug, token, or memorandum entitling the holder to receive money, credit, allowance, or other thing of value.

(b) The limitations of subdivision (a), insofar as they relate to owning, storing, possessing, or transporting any slot machine or device, do not apply to any slot machine or device located upon or being transported by any vessel regularly operated and engaged in interstate or foreign commerce, so long as the slot machine or device is located in a locked compartment of the vessel, is not

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accessible for use, and is not used or operated within the territorial jurisdiction of this state.

- (c) The limitations of subdivision (a) do not apply to a manufacturer's business activities that are conducted in accordance with the terms of a license issued by a tribal gaming agency pursuant to the tribal-state gaming compacts entered into in accordance with the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (18 U.S.C. Sec. 1166 to 1168, inclusive, and 25 U.S.C. Sec. 2701 et seq.).
- (d) For purposes of this section, "slot machine or device" means a machine, apparatus, or device that is adapted, or may readily be converted, for use in a way that, as a result of the insertion of any piece of money or coin or other object, or by any other means, the machine or device is caused to operate or may be operated, and by reason of any element of hazard or chance or of other outcome of operation unpredictable by him or her, the user may receive or become entitled to receive any piece of money, credit, allowance, or thing of value, or additional chance or right to use the slot machine or device, or any check, slug, token, or memorandum, whether of value or otherwise, which may be exchanged for any money, credit, allowance, or thing of value, or which may be given in trade, irrespective of whether it may, apart from any element of hazard or chance or unpredictable outcome of operation, also sell, deliver, or present some merchandise, indication of weight, entertainment, or other thing of value.
- (e) Every-Any person who violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor.
- (1) A first violation of this section shall be punishable by a fine of not less than five hundred dollars (\$500) nor more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000), or by imprisonment in a county jail not exceeding six months, or by both that fine and imprisonment.
- (2) A second offense shall be punishable by a fine of not less than one thousand dollars (\$1,000) nor more than ten thousand dollars (\$10,000), or by imprisonment in a county jail not exceeding six months, or by both that fine and imprisonment.
- (3) A third or subsequent offense shall be punishable by a fine of not less than ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) nor more than twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000), or by imprisonment in a county jail not exceeding one year, or by both that fine and imprisonment.

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(4) If the offense involved more than one machine or more than one location, an additional fine of not less than one thousand dollars (\$1,000) nor more than five thousand dollars (\$5,000) shall be imposed per machine and per location.

- (f) Pinball and other amusement machines or devices, which are predominantly games of skill, whether affording the opportunity of additional chances or free plays or not, are not included within the term slot machine or device, as defined in this section.
- (g) Personal, networked, or server computers are not included within the term "slot machine or device," as defined in this section or Section 330.1, or as used in subdivision (f) of Section 19 of Article IV of the California Constitution or Section 330a of this code, if operated pursuant to a license or permit in compliance with Chapter 5.2 (commencing with Section 1990) of Division 8 of the Business and Professions Code, solely for the purpose of, or in connection with, allowing participation in nonbanked, nonpercentage poker games authorized and regulated pursuant to Chapter 5.2 (commencing with Section 19990) of Division 8 of the Business and Professions Code, and not for the purpose of participating in any other form of gaming activity.
- SEC. 4. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to Section 6 of Article XIIIB of the California Constitution because the only costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school district will be incurred because this act creates a new crime or infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the penalty for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section 17556 of the Government Code, or changes the definition of a crime within the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIIIB of the California Constitution.